



HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY

On January the 27th, the *International Holocaust Remembrance Day*, the Vatican Museums commemorate the victims of the Holocaust with a one-month special focus on the precious sanguine on cardboard by Anton Zoran Mušič entitled *Dachau*, realised in 1945 inside the Nazi concentration camp. The artwork will remain on display until the 2nd of March 2019.

Recently entered the Vatican collections thanks to the generous gift of Giovanna and Armando Santus, the artwork comes from the Collection of Baldo Crismani, a friend with whom Mušič shares the terrible experience of Dachau. Crismani receives as a gift two drawings of a core of about eighty drawings that the artist realises in the winter between 1944 and 1945, documenting one of the darkest chapters of human history.

Born in 1909 in Gorizia, after studying at the Academy of Fine Arts in Zagreb, Mušič travels between Spain and central Europe, finally settling in Venice. In 1944 he is deported to Dachau, where he manages to secretly realise a series of drawings that record the daily atrocities perpetrated in the concentration camp. As the artist himself says, «the corpses were everywhere, stacked on top of each other» and gathering the testimonies of what he saw was for him the only way to survive and save his human integrity.

Mušič was arrested in Venice by the Gestapo at the end of September 1944 because of his friendship with some members of the Slovenian Resistance. On 18 November 1944 he was interned in Dachau and marked with the prisoner number 128231. Here he will remain far beyond the arrival of the allied troops, on 29 April 1945: because of the quarantine imposed on prisoners, he will be released only at the beginning of June 1945 to reach Venice in October, where he will resume his activity as a painter and engraver.

In the Seventies he will revisit the memory of the inhuman experiences lived in the lager in the cycle *We are not the last* (1970-1976), which is a document of time but also a “document of the soul”, where Mušič transforms the hell of the concentration camp into an universal tragedy.